A COLLABORATIVE AFFAIR:

Introduction to the Williams Farmstead Archeological Project

Douglas K. Boyd
PROJECT SPONSOR:

Texas Department of Transportation
State Highway 45 Southwest Toll Road

Williams Farmstead Site
A Collaborative “Public Archeology” Project from 2007 to 2015
Archeology

PROJECT TEAM: Prewitt and Associates, Inc.
D. Boyd            A. Norment       J. McWilliams
Archival Research

PROJECT TEAM:

Preservation Central, Inc.

Terri Myers, historian
Onsite video shooting by UT’s Liberal Arts Instructional Technology Services
Public Outreach - Online Exhibit

Susan Dial, TBH Editor

www.texasbeyondhistory.net
Kid’s Activities on *Texas Beyond History*
What’s the Story of the Ransom Williams Farmstead?

Hey, there are cool lesson plans for Teacher’s too!
Developed by curriculum specialists
Carol Schlenk and Laine Liebick

4th- and 7th-Grade Lesson Plans on TBH
ARCHIVAL RESEARCH
by
Terri Myers

45-Acre Farm
1871 - 1905

Bear Creek
Cabin
Proposed SH 45 SW
1871 Subdivision Plat Map

John McGeehee Survey
Ransom Williams’ History

*Ransom Williams born in Kentucky, ca. 1846
*Brought to Texas as a slave of Bunton family
*Established Mountain City Plantation (Buda)
*Freed by Emancipation Proclamation, 1865
*Hays County voters registration, 1867
*Bought 45-acre farm near Bear Creek in 1871
Williams Family History

*Ransom married Sarah, a former slave, sometime between 1871 and 1875
*They had 5 children between 1876 and 1892 (4 others died in childhood)
*Ransom and Sarah raised their family
*Ransom died in 1901 (age 55)
*Sarah moved to Austin about 1905
*Sarah died in 1921 (age 67 to 70)
*Children sold the farm in 1934 and 1941
Sarah Williams’ Grave
San Marcos-Blanco Cemetery

Where is Ransom buried?

SARAH WILLIAMS
DIED
MARCH 11, 1921
AGE 70
AT REST
ARCHEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS
2005 - 2015

2005   First Site Visit

2007   Site Testing and Archival Research

2009   “Data Recovery” Excavations

2009-2012   Analysis Phase / Report writing

2015   Final Archeological Report Published
Historical Landscape Analysis
Dry-laid Rock Walls

* Property boundary markers
* Livestock fences and corrals
SITE MAPPING at 41TV1051

Proposed State Highway 45 SW
Aerial Photo with site mapping overlay

Landscape Analysis

1937 Aerial Photo with site mapping overlay
Lots of Iron Barrel Hoops near Corral

4 to 6 hoops per barrel
30- to 50-gallon barrels
WATER SOURCES:
Bear Creek and Rainfall Capture
First site visit, 2005
Exposed Foundation Rocks, Chimney Base 2009
Detailed Map of Excavations, 2009

Rock Wall
“Potato Cellar”
Prehistoric Dart Point found inside chimney firebox
21,468 Artifacts Classified by Functional Groups

* Excludes lithics and unidentifiable fragments
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>116</td>
<td>Nov 25, 1871</td>
<td>Wilco A.</td>
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<tr>
<td>117</td>
<td>May 10, 1872</td>
<td>Williams Mike</td>
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<tr>
<td>118</td>
<td>Apr 4, 1872</td>
<td>Williams Ransom</td>
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<tr>
<td>119</td>
<td>May 23, 1873</td>
<td>Wilburn P. k.</td>
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<td>120</td>
<td>July 24, 1872</td>
<td>Woody Jordan D.</td>
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<td>121</td>
<td>Apr 10, 1872</td>
<td>Wilson Albert</td>
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<tr>
<td>122</td>
<td>June 1, 1872</td>
<td>Waldorf J.</td>
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<tr>
<td>123</td>
<td>Apr 30, 1872</td>
<td>Wilson Sam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Travis County Brand Registry - Brand # 118 registered to Ransom Williams, April 4, 1872
Transfer-Printed Dinner Ware
Alfred Meakin Ltd., Kenwood Pattern
Imported from Tunstall, England

Mark used from 1875 to 1897
Alfred Meakin floral pattern
100 piece set = $9.06
1902 Sears Roebuck Catalog, p. 635
Stoneware Pottery
Kitchen Tableware
Glass Bottles
Schies
“jar closure”
1898 Patent
for milk bottles
Activities on the Williams Farmstead
Construction Tools
Ransom Williams and Horses
Clothing & Jewelry
Prosser Buttons
(molded glass)

Decorative Buttons
Sewing Artifacts
Examination of 19th-Century African American Newspapers in Austin Archives

NEDRA LEE
* Systematic analysis -- 135 Issues from 5 Austin newspapers written and published by Freedmen

* Examined 8 years between 1868 - 1907

* Quantified details of each advertisement, article, & announcement

* Created database of 9,166 entries
TOPICS IN NEWSPAPERS

* Advertisements for products and services
* Lynchings and Violence in the Jim Crow South
* Church News
* Importance of Education and Owning Land
* Local News
* State and World News
Remember!

We sell only the pure drugs. All prescriptions filled by experts. Morley Brothers.
Morley Brothers bottles
Morley Brothers Drug Store
Now the Austin Visitor’s Center on 6th Street
Lifestyle Reconstruction Paintings by Frank Weir

--- Images based on Archeology ---

Explore each scene

The Farmstead Layout

The Cabin and Yard

Inside the Cabin
Williams Cabin in 1890

Painting by Frank Weir
What did we learn from the Oral History, Maria?